IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 24, 25, 27, and 32 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 26, 28, 29, 31, 33, and 34 as follows.

Please add new claims 40-42 as follows.

This listing of the claims replaces all prior versions of the claims in the application.

1-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide encoding ~~a polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~a)~~ a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1[[,]]

~~b) a polypeptide comprising a naturally occurring amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and~~

~~c) an immunogenic fragment of a polypeptide consisting of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1~~.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide of claim ~~27~~ 26 comprising a polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

29. (Currently Amended) A recombinant polynucleotide comprising ~~a promoter sequence operably linked to~~ a vector and a polynucleotide of claim 26.

30. (Previously Presented) A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 29.

31. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a polypeptide ~~selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~a) a polypeptide~~ comprising an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1[[,]]

~~b) a polypeptide comprising a naturally occurring amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and~~

~~c) an immunogenic fragment of a polypeptide consisting of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,~~

the method comprising:

1) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide~~, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide~~ of claim ~~26~~ 29, and

2) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide selected from the group consisting of:

a) a polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,

b) ~~a polynucleotide comprising a naturally occurring polynucleotide sequence at least 90% identical to a polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,~~

~~c)~~ a polynucleotide completely complementary to a polynucleotide of a),

~~d) a polynucleotide complementary to a polynucleotide of b),~~ and

~~e)~~ c) an RNA equivalent of a)-~~d)~~ c).

34. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide consisting of at least 60 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 33.

35. (Previously Presented) A method of detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 33, the method comprising:

a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample,

and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and

b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

36. (Previously Presented) A method of claim 35, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

37. (Previously Presented) A method of detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 33, the method comprising:

a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and

b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

38. (Previously Presented) A method of screening a compound for effectiveness in altering expression of a target polynucleotide, wherein said target polynucleotide comprises a sequence of claim 27, the method comprising:

a) exposing a sample comprising the target polynucleotide to a compound, under conditions suitable for the expression of the target polynucleotide,

b) detecting altered expression of the target polynucleotide, and

c) comparing the expression of the target polynucleotide in the presence of varying amounts of the compound and in the absence of the compound.

39. (Previously Presented) A method of assessing toxicity of a test compound, the method comprising:

a) treating a biological sample containing nucleic acids with the test compound,

b) hybridizing the nucleic acids of the treated biological sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 33 under conditions whereby a specific hybridization complex is formed between said probe and a target polynucleotide in the biological sample, said target polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 33 or fragment thereof,

c) quantifying the amount of hybridization complex, and

d) comparing the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample with the amount of hybridization complex in an untreated biological sample, wherein a difference in the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample is indicative of toxicity of the test compound.

40. (New) An isolated polynucleotide encoding an immunogenic portion of a polypeptide consisting of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, said portion consisting of at least 5 contiguous amino acid residues of SEQ ID NO:1.

41. (New) A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a vector and a polynucleotide of claim 40.

42. (New) A method of producing an immunogenic portion of a polypeptide, the method comprising:

a) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the immunogenic portion of a polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 41, and

b) recovering the immunogenic portion of a polypeptide so expressed.